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EXAMINER

KOCH, GEORGE R

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1734

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/661,515

Applicant(s)

LIM ET AL.

Examiner

George R. Koch III

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 June 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-77 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-41 and 75-77 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 42-54 and 67-70 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 55-66 and 71-74 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/19/06</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 6/7/2006 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 42, 44-48, 50, 52, 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Satoshi (Machine translation of the JP 2001-356353 reference submitted in the 12/16/2003 IDS).

Satoshi discloses a method for fabricating a liquid crystal display (LCD) panel using a substrate bonding device (Figure 1) having a base frame (items 2 and 3); a lower chamber unit (item T1) mounted to the base frame, wherein the lower chamber

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unit includes an upper surface; an upper chamber unit (item S1) arranged over the lower chamber unit, wherein the upper chamber unit is moveable relative to the base frame and wherein the upper chamber unit includes a lower surface, chamber moving means mounted to the base frame for raising and lowering the upper chamber unit; an upper stage fixed to the upper chamber unit for securing a first substrate; a lower stage fixed to the lower chamber unit for securing a second substrate; and sealing means provided to at least one of the upper and lower surfaces for sealing an interior space surrounding the first and second substrates, wherein the sealed interior space is definable joined ones of the upper and lower chamber units, the method comprising, loading the first and second substrates onto the upper and lower stages, respectively; lowering the upper chamber unit to seal the interior space from an external environment via the sealing means (paragraph 0033); evacuating the sealed interior space (paragraph 0034); raising the upper chamber unit and the upper stage to align the first and second substrates; contacting the first and second substrates with a sealant material (paragraphs 0036-0037); venting the sealed interior space to apply pressure to the first and second substrates contacted by the sealant material, wherein, after the venting, the first and substrates are bonded together (paragraph 0038, supplying the N₂ gas); and unloading the bonded substrates (paragraph 0038 - insertion and removal of the cel).

As to claim 44, Satoshi disclose coating the sealant material and dispensing the liquid crystal material onto the second substrate (see paragraph 0010, see also paragraph 0032).

As to claims 45, 46, and 47, Satoshi discloses that the sealant is heat and UV treated (i.e., that a sealant that thermosets and photosets is used - see paragraph 0038).

As to claims 48 and 50, Satoshi discloses that the substrate can be a TFT array substrate (see paragraph 0002).

As to claim 52, Satoshi discloses using suction and electrostatic charges as claimed (paragraphs 0020-0022).

As to claim 53, Satoshi discloses that the securing includes generating the suction force before the electrostatic charge (see paragraphs 0033-0035).

As to claim 54, since the evacuating takes place over a period of time, Satoshi discloses that the evacuating includes evacuating the sealed interior space to a first pressure and further substantially evacuating the sealed interior space after the sealed interior space has been evacuated to the first pressure.

4. Claims 42, 44, 45, 49-50, 52, 53, 54 and 67 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hazishume (US 2002/0062787).

Hazishume discloses a method for fabricating a liquid crystal display (LCD) panel using a substrate bonding device (Figure 19 or 35-36) having a base frame (visible in Figure 19 or 35-36); a lower chamber unit (item 71b, see Figure 10) mounted to the base frame, wherein the lower chamber unit includes an upper surface (including 72b); an upper chamber unit (item 71a, Figure 10) arranged over the lower chamber unit, wherein the upper chamber unit is moveable relative to the base frame and wherein the upper chamber unit includes a lower surface (including item 72a), chamber moving

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means (item 125, Figure 19) mounted to the base frame for raising and lowering the upper chamber unit; an upper stage (item 72a) fixed to the upper chamber unit for securing a first substrate; a lower stage (item 72b) fixed to the lower chamber unit for securing a second substrate; and sealing means provided to at least one of the upper and lower surfaces for sealing an interior space surrounding the first and second substrates (item 242 and 241 in Figure 35, or item 259 in Figure 36), wherein the sealed interior space is definable joined ones of the upper and lower chamber units, the method comprising, loading the first and second substrates onto the upper and lower stages (shown in Figure 10 and paragraphs 0119-0125), respectively; lowering the upper chamber unit to seal the interior space from an external environment via the sealing means (shown in Figure 19, also recited in paragraph 0133 - "closes the vacuum chamber 71"); evacuating the sealed interior space (paragraph 0134); raising the upper chamber unit and the upper stage to align the first and second substrates (see Figure 17, description of alignment device in paragraphs 0165-0175); contacting the first and second substrates with a sealant material (see paragraph 0081); venting the sealed interior space to apply pressure to the first and second substrates contacted by the sealant material, wherein, after the venting (paragraph 0184), the first and substrates are bonded together (see paragraph 0176-0185); and unloading the bonded substrates (Figure 21 - see paragraphs 0191-0194. The transportation effectively vents as well).

As to claim 44, Hazishume discloses prior to loading, coating sealant and liquid crystal material onto the second substrate (see paragraph 0083, which discloses that the liquid crystal is disposed on the same substrate that has the seal).

As to claim 45, Hazishume recites UV photosetting sealant (paragraph 0017, 0200, which recites that the lamp is a UV lamp).

As to claim 49, Hazishume discloses that the upper substrate is a color filter (paragraph 0079).

As to claims 50, Hazishume discloses that the lower substrate is a TFT (paragraph 0079).

As to claim 52, Hazishume discloses securing the substrates by use of suction and electrostatic charge (see paragraph 0132).

As to claim 53, Hazishume recites generating suction before electrostatic (see paragraph 0132, for example).

As to claim 54, since the evacuating takes place over a period of time, Satoshi discloses that the evacuating includes evacuating the sealed interior space to a first pressure and further substantially evacuating the sealed interior space after the sealed interior space has been evacuated to the first pressure.

As to claim 67, Hazishume discloses directing UV light (see paragraph 0200).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148

USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining

obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. Claim 43 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoshi as applied to claim 42 above or Hazishume (US 2002/0062787) as applied to claim 42 above, and further in view of Gaynes (6,129,804).

As to claim 43, Satoshi and Hazishume does not disclose applying sealant and liquid crystal material to different substrates. However, both Gaynes discloses utilizing liquid crystal tiles (with the material already applied) and bonding them to a separate substrate (the back or cover plates) that has sealant materials (item 15) previously applied. One in the art would do so in order to facilitate bonding. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have utilized material applied to multiple substrates in order to facilitate bonding.

8. Claims 67-70 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoshi as applied to claim 42 above or Hazishume (US 2002/0062787) as applied to claim 42 above, and further in view of Gaynes (6,129,804)

Satoshi discloses applying UV light to the material to harden the material, but does not disclose directing the UV light. However, Gaynes discloses that it is known to use multiple light guides to direct the UV light. One in the art would do so in order to prevent overheating or damage to other locations of the substrate. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have utilized directing of the UV light in order to prevent overheating or damage.

As to claim 68, neither Satoshi nor Hazishume disclose directing the light to multiple regions

As to claim 68, Gaynes as incorporated discloses that it is known to apply the UV light to multiple regions of the substrate, and discloses 8 regions (see Figure 3, items 66). Furthermore, it would have been obvious to expand the number of UV zones. One in the art would do so in order to handle larger substrates. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have utilized at least 10 regions in order to bond larger substrates.

As to claims 69 and 70, official notice is taken that it is well known and conventional to apply UV light at any point after the coating operation. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have utilized in order to ensure proper sealing.

9. Claims 48- 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoshi as applied to claim 42 above, and further JP09-061829 (from 12/16/2003 IDS) and Hazishume (2002/0062787).

Satoshi does not suggest using a color filter substrate - Satoshi only discloses bonding TFT substrates to each other.

JP09-061829 discloses that the substrates can be a color filter substrate, and that the color filter substrate results in a LCD element that has high display uniformity (see abstract). Additionally, Hazishume discloses that TFT substrates are bonded to TFT substrates (paragraph 0079). Furthermore, one in the art would appreciate that either the first or second substrate could be the color filter substrate, as a matter of design choice. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to have utilized color filter substrates in order to achieve a LCD element that has high display uniformity.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments filed 4/25/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.
11. First, Hazishume has been applied as a second set of rejections.
12. Applicant argues that claim 42 is patentable because Satoshi does not recite moving the upper chamber and the upper stage. However, Satoshi does disclose this in paragraph 0015 of the translation. The top chamber 21 has a linear structure which moves up and down. The stage itself also moves up and down. It appears applicant believes that these steps must occur synchronously, however, this limitation is not part of the claim.
13. Additionally, Hazishume applies for the same reason.

Allowable Subject Matter

14. Claims 55-66 and 71-74 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

15. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

With regard to claims 55-63, while the prior art of record does suggest holding the first and second substrates apart by a predetermined distance and aligning using rough and fine alignment marks as claimed (for example, 2002/0043344, see Figure 4), the prior art does suggest doing so in the context of the limitations of claim 42.

With regard to claim 64-65, the prior art of record (Satoshi - see rejection of claims 52 and 53 above) does disclose applying a suction and electrostatic charge from the upper stage to the first substrate, and aligning the first and second substrate, the prior art of record does not disclose deactivating the electrostatic charge applied from the upper stage, raising the upper chamber unit to a predetermined height, determining the alignment state of the first and second substrates, and realigning the aligned first and second substrates as determined based upon the determination of the alignment state.

With regard to claim 66, the prior art of record does not disclose, in the context of the limitations of claim 42, the further limitations of providing a plurality of venting holes

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within the upper and lower stages, and providing low vacuum chamber pipelines to the sealed interior space, wherein the venting includes: in a first venting step, injecting nitrogen gas into the sealed interior space through the plurality of venting holes provided within the upper and lower stages; and in a second step, injecting nitrogen gas through the low vacuum chamber pipelines increase the pressure inside the sealed interior space equal to an atmospheric pressure.

With regard to claim 71, the prior art of record does not disclose, in the context of the limitations of claim 42, the further limitations of wherein the unloading includes: securing the bonded substrates to the upper stage; raising the upper stage to which the bonded substrates are secured; arranging a loader proximate the bonded substrates, secured to the upper stage; releasing the bonded substrates from the upper stage, wherein the released bonded substrates are supported by the loader; and removing the loader supporting the bonded substrates from the substrate bonding machine.

With regard to claim 72, the prior art of record does not disclose, in the context of the limitations of claim 42, the further limitations of wherein the unloading includes: securing the bonded substrates to the upper stage; raising the upper stage to which the bonded substrates are secured; raising a lift pin through the lower stage and over the upper surface, wherein the raised lift pin is proximate the secured bonded substrates; releasing the bonded substrates from the upper stage, wherein the released bonded substrates are supported by the raised lift pin; and arranging a loader proximate the bonded substrates supported by the raised lift pin; lowering the raised lift pin such that

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the bonded substrates are supported by the loader; and removing the loader supporting the bonded substrates from the substrate bonding machine.

With regard to claims 73-74, the prior art of record does not disclose, in the context of the limitations of claim 42, the further limitations of wherein the unloading includes: raising the bonded substrates above the upper surface, wherein the raised bonded substrates are supported by a raised lift pin arranged through the lower stage and over the upper surface; arranging a loader proximate the raised bonded substrates supported by the lift pin; lowering the raised lift pin such that the bonded substrates are supported by the loader; and removing the loader supporting the bonded substrates from the substrate bonding machine.

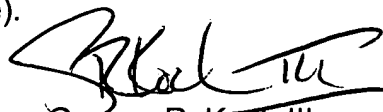
Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to George R. Koch III whose telephone number is (571) 272-1230 (TDD only). If the applicant cannot make a direct TDD-to-TDD call, the applicant can communicate by calling the Federal Relay Service at 1-866-377-8642 and giving the operator the above TDD number. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher Fiorilla can be reached on (571) 272-1187. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



George R. Koch III
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1734

GRK
7/24/2006